

To The Federal Communications Commission:

I am submitting these comments regarding the FCC's "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" 05-311 on video franchising.

As a supporter, producer, host, volunteer, and chair of the board of Citizens' Community Television channel 54, the public access channel seen in Louisville, Lafayette, Superior, and Erie, Colorado, I have strong feeling about the continuation of public access TV in my area. We at CCTV54 started cablecasting local programming in January 2004. We started with two, hour-long, weekly shows, and we are now cablecasting five live shows, and two taped programs per week. In our first year, our flagship weekly magazine show, "East County LIVE!", included five short videos highlighting local events. In our second year, we tripled that number to 15 short videos on festivals, cultural events, rallies, parades, park dedications, town fairs, and similar events important to our communities. Over 95% of our guests are from these four cities or from Boulder County where they are located. Our guests range from elementary-school-aged Cub Scouts to distinguished elders, and have represented all segments of the economic, ethnic, and interest classes residing here.

Each of the CCTV54 shows features local people, local concerns, local events, local artists, or local issues. The programming topics we produce on CCTV54 will never be featured, are rarely even given a nod, on the Denver channels, yet the issues in our towns and the activities of our citizens are just as vital to the residents of these four cities. The diversity of our guests, and the breadth of the viewpoints presented are not replicated in any local media, have not been over the last 3 decades of my residency here, and I am sure will not be over what I hope to be the next 30 years of my life in this community.

Local government and participation by residents has only been enhanced by the PEG channels. The combination of coverage of city meetings on the Government channel, and in-depth discussion of the associated issues on the Public channel has heightened awareness of local politics and the decisions made by local governments and their boards and commissions, and has improved local input to these processes.

For a vital democracy, for strong communities, and for the political health of our nation, I strongly urge the FCC to maintain local franchises in the cable network, and especially to maintain provisions for PEG channels in the future of cable TV.

Sincerely,

Cecilia M.I.R. Girz